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INFORMATION REPORT

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COUNTRY Czechoslovakia

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SUBJECT Collectivization of Czechoslovak Agriculture

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1. The Ministry of Agriculture is very dissatisfied with the present development of the Agricultural Cooperatives (JED). In addition to the difficulties connected with the foundation of the cooperatives, caused mainly by the fact that the great majority of farmers resists the pressure of the Government to join them, there is a decree of the Ministry of Finance and Ministry of Agriculture which severely threatens the development of the Agricultural Cooperatives. Formerly, these cooperatives received high subsidies to cover investment and working expenses (sometimes almost 60 percent of the purchase costs was covered by subsidies) from the State Treasury, whereas now the farmers must acquire the money needed for investment and running expenses by credit based on promissory notes and long-term loans with all members of the Cooperative serving as guarantors. The farmers soon realized the danger of such a personal liability and could well imagine that, because of the inefficient operation of the Agricultural Cooperatives, they would lose the rest of their property within a couple of years. Preliminary investigations carried out by the State Bank showed that seventy percent of the Agricultural Cooperatives of the higher type will be operating at a loss to the same extent as they did last year.
2. According to the plan of the Ministry of Agriculture the collectivization of agriculture should be completed within three years by forming cooperatives of the fourth type.
3. Preliminary surveys carried out by the State Bank also indicate that the state-owned estates will close this year with a loss of two billion Kcs, because most of the people refused to work for the wages set in accordance with the Soviet system of group wages. For that reason the state-owned estates have to pay the same wages as in 1950 which are too high in comparison with the prices paid for products sold by the estates.

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